#33 Fishery Leaflet #338

COMMERCIAL FISHERIES OUTLOOK

October-December 1963

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service - Bureau of Commercial Fisheries

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FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

GENERAL FISHERY SITUATION

Wholesale price index for edible fishery products in August '63 at 105.5% of the 1957-59 average was 13.2% lower than August '62. Several major fishery products were in good supply during August including fresh and frozen shrimp and some of the canned fish items. Wholesale prices for shrimp were about 27% lower in August '63 than in August '62.

Imports during Jan.-July '63 were lower than in same period last year for most major species. However, receipts of blocks and slabs, shrimp, sardines (not-in-oil), and fish meal were much higher.

Exports first seven months '63 were higher than same period '62 for frozen and canned salmon, fish oils, and frozen and canned shrimp. Lower exports during same period for canned mackerel, canned sardines, and miscellaneous canned fish.

Fish meal and scrap production in the United States during Jan.-August '63 = 171,629 tons compared with 205,904 tons during the first eight months in '62. In the world market, Peru, South Africa, and the United States are the principal producers.

Cold-storage holdings of edible fishery products Sept. 1, '63 = 210.5 mil. lbs.; Sept. 1, '62 = 190.5 mil. lbs.; Sept. 1, '61 = 181.4 mil. lbs. Inventories of most major species were in higher supply on Sept. 1, '63 than a year earlier except haddock and pollock fillets, whiting, spiny lobsters, scallops, and some species of fresh-water fish.

Maine sardines will be included on the List of Foods in Plentiful Supply and will be listed in the Food Stamp Program for November by the Department of Agriculture.

Menhaden landings during the first eight months of '63 were 1.3 billion pounds, about 336 million pounds less than in the same period of '62. During August there was a marked drop in volume in every State except Louisiana along both the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts.

Salt-water Fish

FISH STICKS & PORTIONS

Market - Steady
Supplies - Moderate-to-Liberal
Demand - Good

Fish stick prod. first 6 mos. '63 = 43.1 mil. lbs., about 16% above same period '62. Fish portion prod. same period = 48.5 mil. lbs., up 11.7 mil. lbs. Combined holdings Sept. 1, '63 = 11.1 mil. lbs., Sept. 1, '62 = 8.2 mil. lbs. Prices steady this quarter. Institutional demand particularly good.

FLOUNDER & SOLE FILLETS

Market - Steady
Supplies - Liberal
Demand - Good

Landings of flounder in Mass. during 8 mos. '63 were 60 mil. lbs., about 13.4 mil. lbs. higher than same period year earlier. Fillet holdings Sept. 1, '63 = 5.4 mil. lbs., 30% above Sept. 1, '62. Imports flounder fillets first 7 mos. '63 = 9.0 mil. lbs., almost 2.0 mil. lbs. below those during Jan.-July '62. Decreased landings this quarter.

COD FILLETS

Market - Steady
Supplies - Light-to-Moderate
Demand - Good

Cod landings should seasonally decrease this quarter. Inventories fillets Sept. 1, '63 = 8.9 mil. lbs., about same as year earlier. Imports Jan.-July '62 were 18.6 mil. lbs., about 1 mil. lbs. below first 7 mos. '62. Prices should remain firm.

HADDOCK FILLETS

Market - Steady
Supplies - Light-to-Moderate
Demand - Good

Landings of haddock first 8 mos. '63 = 80.5 mil. lbs.; Jan.-Aug. '62 = 84.8 mil. lbs. Holdings Sept. 1, '63 = 7.0 mil. lbs., about 1.1 mil. lbs. lower than Sept. 1, '62. Imports thru July '63 = 15.0 mil. lbs. compared with 15.3 mil. lbs. during Jan.-July '62. Prices expected to rise.

OCEAN PERCH FILLETS

Market - Steady
Supplies - Moderate-to-Liberal
Demand - Good

Landings ocean perch during first 8 mos. '63 = 80.2 mil. lbs.; Jan.-Aug. '62 = 94.8 mil. lbs. Continued lighter landings this quarter. Holdings Sept. 1, '63 = 12.8 mil. lbs., about 9.5% higher than last year. Imports Jan.-July '63 = 9.1 mil. lbs., thru July '62 = 7.8 mil. lbs. Prices expected to rise slightly.

HALIBUT

Market - Steady
Supplies - Moderate-to-Liberal
Demand - Good

U.S. landings during Jan.-Aug. '63 = 31.1 mil. lbs., compared with 36.1 mil. lbs. in Jan.-Aug. '62 because of decreased effort of fleet. Holdings Sept.1, '63 were 28.2 mil. lbs., about 15% above those on Sept. 1, '62. Prices should become firm this quarter.

MACKEREL, CANNED

Market - Steady
Supplies - Liberal
Demand - Moderate

California landings Pacific and Jack mackerel thru Sept. 30, '63 = 44 300 tons; comparable period '62 35,000 tons. Canned mackerel sales will continue to export trade because of expected exhausted supplies of California sardines. Exports canned mackerel thru July '63 = 2.0 mil. lbs.; year earlier 3.0 mil. lbs. Prices expected to remain at reduced level.

SALMON, CANNED

Market - Unsettled
Supplies - Moderate-to-Liberal
Demand - Good

Alaska pack thru late Sept. '63 = 2.7 mil. std. cases; same period '62 = 3.4 mil. std. cases. Pink inventories quite high as result of 3 big pack years. Imports Jan.-July '63 were only 655,000 lbs., down 5.6 mil. lbs. from same period in '62. Exports first 7 mos. '63 = 4.9 mil. lbs., Jan.-July '62 = 4.4 mil. lbs. Pink prices quite unsettled.

SARDINES, MAINE----------

Market - Unsettled
Supplies - Moderate-to-Liberal
Demand - Moderate

Canned inventories are very high and many canning plants have closed for the season. Slow movement of this product has resulted in some serious marketing problems. Prices have weakened considerably from last year but there was some strengthening during this quarter.

TUNA, CANNED----------

Market - Active
Supplies - Moderate
Demand - Good

California pack Jan.-Sept. 21, '63 = 6.8 mil. std. cases about 22% below same period '62. California canners processing at near record rates. Albacore landings continue heavy. Increased sales reported during 3rd quarter '63 expected to continue thru end of year. Imports frozen tuna during first 7 mos. '63 = 130.7 mil. lbs. about 23% below same period '62. Prices should firm up this quarter.

Shellfish

CRAB MEAT----------

Market - Steady
Supplies - Moderate
Demand - Good

Production on East Coast will be lower during this quarter. On the Pacific Coast, season for Dungeness crabs opens late in quarter. Imports canned crab meat Jan.-July '63 = 2.5 mil. lbs., Jan.-July '62 = 1.6 mil. lbs. Inventories frozen crab meat Sept. 1, '63 = 2.9 mil. lbs., about 25% higher than year earlier. Prices will remain firm during quarter.

SCALLOPS, SEA----------

Market - Firm
Supplies - Moderate
Demand - Good

Total Mass. landings scallops first 8 mos. '63 = 12.9 mil. lbs.; Jan.-Aug. '62 = 15.9 mil. lbs. Holdings Sept. 1, '63 = 2.7 mil. lbs., about 5% below Sept. 1, '62. Imports thru July '63 = 7.7 mil. lbs.; Jan.-July '62 = 7.2 mil. lbs. Canada largest supplier. Few receipts from Japan. Prices have continued to rise since last May. Will remain firm.

SHRIMP----------

Market - Active
Supplies - Liberal
Demand - Good

Production of shrimp this year to date has been substantially greater than last year, and will continue well into this quarter. Prices have dropped considerably and should weaken slightly more. Inventories canned small shrimp high. Holdings frozen shrimp Sept. 1, '63 = 37.5 mil. lbs.; Sept. 1, '62 = 18.4 mil. lbs. Imports Jan.-July '63 = 81.5 mil. lbs., about 9.4 mil. lbs. more than same period '62 and will continue heavy.

Industrial Products

FISH MEAL----------

Market - Steady
Supplies - Light-to-Moderate
Demand - Good

Production Jan.-July '63 = 128,300 tons; first 7 mos. '62 = 177,440 tons, a decline of 28%. Imports Jan.-July '63 = 225,160 tons, same period '62 = 166,745 tons. Decline in domestic production resulted in advances in price of imported meal. Prices should remain firm during quarter.

FISH OIL----------

Market - Steady
Supplies - Moderate
Demand - Good

Production thru July '63 = 99.7 mil. lbs.; Jan.-July '62 = 139.5 mil. lbs. Exports during same period '63 = 127.1 mil. lbs., about double those a year earlier. Because of a decline in fish oil production this season, the domestic market is expected to hold steady at current levels.

GENERAL BUSINESS CONDITIONS

Industrial production declined slightly in August, and at 126 percent of the 1957-59 average, it was only one point below the record high reached in July. The small decline was attributed to the drop in iron and steel production and in the output of autos which was down 9 percent from July.

Construction remained at a record level in August. Residential activity declined from its high in June, but other private construction continued to rise. Public construction increased somewhat.

Employment in nonagricultural establishments remained unchanged in August following 7 months of advance. The unemployment rate was 5.5 percent, compared with 5.7 percent a year earlier.

THE FOOD SITUATION

Meat - Red meat production continues high and per capita consumption in '63 is expected to reach 167 pounds, about 3 pounds more than in 1962. Beef consumption will account for most of the increase. Pork output expected to increase seasonally during October and November. Lamb crop running about 3 percent below '62 with per capita supplies expected to be down through balance of the year.

Dairy Products - Milk production in second half '63 is expected to decline seasonally. Cow numbers keep declining. Total dairy supplies exceed domestic and export uses.

Fats and Oils - The supply of edible fats and oils during the marketing year which began October 1 could total 16.7 billion pounds, slightly above the record quantity during the past year. Exports of edible vegetable oils, lard, butter, and soybeans probably will be above the record 4.5 billion pounds estimated for 1962-63 year.

Poultry and Eggs - Turkey crop expected to reach 93-94 million birds compared with 92.3 million last year. Prices during the holiday seasons might approximate year-earlier levels. Broiler slaughter through mid-fall will probably increase 5 percent. Egg production during remainder of year is expected to be about the same as last year. Per capita consumption, however, will drop about 10 eggs from the 324 consumed last year.

Agriculture - Based on September 1 conditions, crop production was estimated at 108 percent of the 1957-59 average, up 1 percent from the estimate of a month earlier. Record large crops were estimated for corn, soybeans, rice, and sugar.

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